

**ROBBINSVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
March 31, 2009**

**PUBLIC HEARING
2009-2010 PROPOSED BUDGET ADOPTION**

ROBBINSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL - STUDENT ACTIVITIES CENTER



MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. Michael Reca, President
Mrs. Maxine Fox, Vice President
Mrs. Carol Boyne
Mrs. Sharon DeVito
Ms. Melissa Foy
Mr. Thomas Halm, Jr.
Mr. Matthew O'Grady
Mrs. Lainie Potter
Mrs. Faith Silvestrov

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. John J. Szabo

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Kathie Foster

SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR / BOARD SECRETARY

Ms. Louise B. Davis

BOARD ATTORNEY

Matthew Giacobbe, Esq., Scarinci & Hollenbeck - Absent

ROBBINSVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION

March 31, 2009
7:00 PM

ROBBINSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL - STUDENT ACTIVITIES CENTER

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER PUBLIC MEETING

Mr. Mike Reca, President, called the March 31, 2009 Special Meeting of the Robbinsville Board of Education to order at 7:05 PM.

II. STATEMENT OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to insure the rights of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, the Robbinsville Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Trenton Times and the Township of Robbinsville Bulletin Board. In addition, this notice was faxed to the Trenton Times and posted at Windsor School, Sharon School, Pond Road Middle School and Robbinsville High School.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. ROLL CALL

All Board members were present.

V. 2009-2010 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Superintendent, John R. Szabo, led the budget presentation. He was assisted by School Business Administrator, Louise B. Davis, PRMS Principal Paul Gizzo and Sharon Principal Janet Sinkewicz.

VI. MOTION TO MOVE THE HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

On motion of Mrs. Boyne, and seconded by Mr. O'Grady, the Board voted to change the order of the agenda to allow the Hearing of the Public to directly follow the Budget Presentation.

VII. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

A. DEBBY MUENCH

A teacher at Sharon Elementary School, Mrs. Munch indicated that the addition of a modular unit (2 classrooms) at Sharon will not change the current difficult conditions (see Facilities – Sharon School slides of Budget Presentation for specifics detailing current conditions). She thanked Dr. Szabo for providing a monthly / weekly breakdown (\$189.20 mo. / \$15.77 wk.) of the anticipated tax rate increase for the average Robbinsville homeowner.

B. JOHN RUCH

Mr. Ruch asked for clarification on the earlier issue of converting the PRMS Media Center to additional classroom space. Dr. Szabo indicated that in addition to the cost factor (approximately \$200,000.00) anticipated code problems could warrant the conversion ineffective.

Mr. Ruch asked how the budget cuts would impact students. Dr. Szabo described that in building the budget, all areas were analyzed with regard to their affect on students. Steps were then taken to minimize any negative impact, i.e. adding teaching staff to avoid increased class size. Mr. Ruch expressed concern about future budgets. He also asked for details on the use of carts at PRMS.

C. WALTER DABROWSKI

Mr. Dabrowski asked if the district is still paying tuition to Lawrence Township. Ms. Davis indicated that we owe approximately \$76,000.00 (2006-2007) to Lawrence and hope to pay it off by June 30, 2009. Mr. Dabrowski also asked if the Budget Presentation would be on the website. Dr. Szabo confirmed that it would be added to the district's homepage the following day.

D. FLO GANGE

Mrs. Gange indicated that she is concerned about the district's overcrowding. A discussion ensued about the inaccuracy of past demographic studies and the possibility of conducting a new one. Mr. O'Grady suggested that a feasibility study – shared with the township – would provide more accurate data which would enable district and township officials to plan for educational needs and for the needs of the general public. Mr. O'Grady stressed that passage of the budget is the first critical step in moving ahead with a capital project or referendum.

E. MIKE CAPUTO

Mr. Caputo inquired about the status of carpeting and roof repairs. Ms. Davis indicated that as part of the Mercer County Shared Services Commission, the district is in a good position to qualify for federal "Shovel Ready" money to fund projects like the roof repairs and installation of solar panels.

F. GEORGE GOTHER

Mr. Gother complimented the Board for its efforts related to encouraging people to vote for passage of the budget. He asked if any of the cuts are in the area of curriculum. Dr. Szabo noted that students in the Elementary World Language program would receive fewer hours of instruction but that the program will otherwise remain intact.

Mr. Gother asked about the status of the district's lawsuit related to its attempt to obtain greater funding. Dr. Szabo informed the group that the suit was not dismissed. Rather, because of the new funding formula, the state indicated that the suit could not go forward. Dr. Szabo indicated that the district is in a "Catch 22" position. As the most efficient "1" district in the state, Robbinsville continues to be below adequacy standards set by the New Jersey Department of Education while continuing to provide quality curriculum and instruction.

VIII. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

Upon closure of the Hearing of the Public at 8:02 PM, the Board continued a discussion related to adoption of the 2009-2010 Budget. Points of discussion included the following:

- Undesignated surplus in the amount of \$90,000.00 was added to the Fund Balance to restore the Jr. AFROTC program for the 2009-2010 school year. A subcommittee has been formed to explore ways to permanently maintain the program.
- Waste Management / Recycling Program: Concern was expressed about the cost of instituting a district wide recycling program at the expense of instructional programs. School Business Administrator Louise Davis noted the line item cost is \$48,000.00 for the year. She indicated that she will provide a detailed breakdown of these costs to Board members. A suggestion was made to explore the possibility of sharing waste management services with the township as a way to benefit the taxpayer. Ms. Davis recommended additional discussion on the matter at committee level. The Finance, Facilities and Transportation Committee is scheduled to meet on April 7, 2009.
- Board President Mike Reca complimented administrators on their diligence and team work in creating the 2009-2010 budget. Other Board members echoed his sentiments and expressed their appreciation, particularly for the principals and vice principals for their efforts. Several members agreed that while they intended to approve the proposed budget, it was a difficult decision due to the fact that it is a maintenance budget only and lacking educational initiatives.

IX. RESOLUTIONS BEING PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL

On motion of Mrs. Boyne, and seconded by Mrs. DeVito, and carried by a vote of 9 – 0, the Board adopted the 2009-2010 Proposed Budget for Robbinsville Public Schools (VIII.A).

A. ADOPTION OF 2009-2010 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR ROBBINSVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Be it Resolved that the Robbinsville Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Robbinsville Public Schools Proposed Budget for FY 2009-2010 as follows. The supporting documentation of this budget contains the itemization of certain expenditures required under administrative regulations.

	Budget	Local Tax Levy
Total General Fund	\$ 33,853,778	\$ 29,661,806
Total Special Revenue Fund	\$ 358,152	-----
Total Debt Service Fund	<u>\$ 4,436,984</u>	<u>\$ 4,351,668</u>
Total	\$ 38,648,914	\$ 34,013,474

On motion of Mrs. Fox, and seconded by Mr. O’Grady, and carried by a vote of 9 – 0, the Board authorized district participation in the New Jersey State Health Benefits Program (VIII.B).

B. NEW JERSEY STATE HEALTH BENEFITS

That the Robbinsville Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, authorize participation in the New Jersey State Health Benefits Program Act of the State of New Jersey.

Be it Resolved that the Robbinsville Board of Education hereby elects to participate in the Health Program provided by the New Jersey State Health Benefits Act of the State of New Jersey (N.J.S.A. 52:14-17.25 et seq.) and to authorize coverage for all employees and their dependents thereunder in accordance with the statute and regulations adopted by the State Health Benefits Commission.

Be it Resolved that the Robbinsville Board of Education elects to participate in the SHBP Employee Prescription Drug Plan defined by N.J.S.A. 52:14-17.25 et seq. and authorize coverage for all employees and their dependents in accordance by the State Health Benefits Commission.

Be it Resolved that the Robbinsville Board of Education, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:9-4.6 requires a minimum of 60% time (as per negotiated contract) as the minimum standard for full time status.

Be it Resolved that as a participating employer, the Robbinsville Board of Education will remit to the State Treasury all charges due on account of employee and dependent coverage and periodic charges in accordance with the requirements of the statute and the rules and regulations duly promulgated thereunder.

Be it Resolved that the Robbinsville Board of Education hereby appoints Louise B. Davis, School Business Administrator / Board Secretary, to act as Certifying Officer in administration of this program.

Be it resolved that this resolution shall take effect immediately and coverage shall be effective as of July 1, 2009 or as soon thereafter as it may be effectuated pursuant to the statutes and regulations.

X. ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Mr. Halm, and seconded by Mr. O'Grady, and carried by a vote of 9 – 0, the Board voted to adjourn the March 31, 2009 Special Meeting of the Robbinsville Board of Education at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

**Louise B. Davis
School Business Administrator / Board Secretary**